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Agenda item 40
The situation in the Middle East

Security Council
Fifty-sixth year

Letter dated 29 May 2001 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to call your attention to the grievous action perpetrated by Israel inside the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic in the southern sector of the Syrian front when, at 2200 hours local time on 2 May 2001, two Israeli 155-millimetre artillery tracer shells impacted in an area 100 metres south of Sayda village. The Syrian Arab Republic holds Israel fully responsible for such hostile practices, which are part of a series of recurring acts of aggression against the Syrian Arab Republic and represent a serious escalation of the tense situation in the region and a continuation of Israel's flagrant defiance of all the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly. The Syrian Arab Republic demands that these acts of aggression be condemned and that they be ended.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic requests you to have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 40, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Fayssal **Mekdad**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Letter dated 23 May 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I should like to inform you that in its letters dated 1 December 1999 and 11 October 2000 addressed to Mr. Richard Foran, coordinator of the return of Kuwaiti property, the Government of Iraq requested that a specific time should be designated for the return of the following Kuwaiti property that had been found on the local Iraqi market:

1. A green leather case inscribed "Gift to His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah from his brother King Fahd Bin Abdul-Aziz";

2. A magnum revolver with rifle stock and sight inscribed "For the Amirs and Kings of the Gulf — Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah";

3. An automatic hunting rifle inscribed "Sheikh Mubarak Al-Abdullah Al-Ahmad";

4. Thirteen dishes, as follows:

   Five large dishes with decorated edge in 24-carat gold bearing the emblem of Kuwait;

   One small dish with decorated edge in 24-carat gold bearing the emblem of Kuwait;

   One decorated dish in 24-carat gold bearing the emblem of Kuwait;

   Five medium-small dishes with decorated edge in 24-carat gold, without emblem;

   One small dish with decorated edge in 24-carat gold, without emblem;

5. One bronze statuette of a Southeast Asian man playing a musical instrument;

6. A Smith & Wesson steel magnum revolver numbered 357 and inscribed "Presented to His Excellency Sheikh Salim Sabah Al-Salim Al-Sabah";

7. A painting entitled "Doves of the East" by the English artist Alfred Elmore and dated 1880, damaged;

8. A painting of a rural Dutch scene from the classical period;

9. A painting of churches by an artist from one of the socialist countries from the early twentieth century;

10. A painting of a snowy forest scene by a contemporary artist, dated 1985.

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Most regrettably, the United Nations Secretariat never responded to these two requests and has not designated a time or place for the property to be handed over.

I should further like to inform you that the Iraqi authorities recently found two swords on the local market, one of them in the possession of a national of an Arab country. Both are inscribed with the words "This weapon was made in the time of His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, A.H. 1404/A.D. 1984". They are stamped with the British royal seal and the English letter "W" and are inscribed with the Koranic verse "If Allah is your helper none can overcome you" (3:160). One of the swords has a leather scabbard.

We request you to intervene and to designate a time and place for the handover of this property without reference to the mechanisms established by Security Council resolution 1284 (1999), whose true objective, as has now become clear one and a half years after its adoption, is to deceive world public opinion, to impose a long series of conditions on the lifting of the unjust embargo being maintained against Iraq and to rewrite the previous Security Council resolutions in a tendentious and unlawful manner. This resolution has deepened the crisis of credibility the Security Council is enduring with respect to the question of Iraq, and it has distanced the Council from the proper attitude that is required for the consideration of Iraq's compliance and the lifting of the sanctions imposed on it. It has also become clear that the person appointed as coordinator for issues relating to missing persons and property, namely Mr. Yuli Vorontsov, is playing a role that is other than impartial, is making statements that are hostile to Iraq and is giving currency to allegations that are untrue. This only confirms the non-objective character of resolution 1284 (1999) and of its mechanisms.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mohammed A. **Al-Douri**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative